

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of controlling switching of an operation mode of a TV phone, where the TV phone includes a TV unit that reproduces and outputs a video signal and an audio signal from a selected channel, a display unit that interfaces with the TV unit and receives and displays the video signals from the TV unit while in a TV mode, a TV audio signal processor that receives the audio signal from the TV unit and outputs audible sound, a mobile radio frequency processor (MRFU) that receives data of a forward channel transmitted from a base station, and a mobile signal processor (MSP) that provides a channel selecting signal to the TV unit in the TV mode, and transmits and receives an audio signal input from the MRFU in a phone mode, the method comprising the steps of:

alerting the user of an incoming call in response to an incoming call signal transmitted from the base station when the TV phone is in a TV mode; and

switching from the TV mode to the phone mode.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of switching from the TV mode to the phone mode is in response to input by the user of a command that permits the call to proceed.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of switching from the TV mode to the phone mode is prevented in response to input by the user of a command rejecting the incoming call.

4. The method of Claim 3, wherein the input by the user of a command rejecting the incoming call terminates the step of alerting the user of an incoming call.

5 5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the switching from the TV mode to the phone mode includes transmitting an incoming call response message to the calling party through a reverse channel.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of alerting the user of an incoming call includes displaying a character message on the display unit.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of alerting the user of an incoming call includes interrupting of an audio output from a speaker of the TV phone.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of alerting the user of an incoming call includes generating an audio output from a speaker of the TV phone.

20 9. The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the switching step includes disabling the operation of the TV unit.

25 10. The method in accordance with Claim 9, wherein the disabling of the operation of the TV unit is by interrupting power supply voltage supplied to the TV module.

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11. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of switching from the TV mode to the phone mode, is performed automatically upon receipt of an incoming call signal.

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12. The method of Claim 11, including the additional step of setting the TV phone to an automatic mode prior to reception of the incoming call signal, the step of switching from the TV mode to the phone mode being enabled by the setting of the automatic mode and occurring automatically.

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13. The method of Claim 11, wherein the switching step further comprises the step of transmitting a response message for the incoming call to the calling party through a reverse channel.

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14. A method of controlling switching of an operation mode of a TV phone, the method comprising the steps of:

alerting the user of an incoming call in response to an incoming call signal transmitted from the base station when the TV phone is in a TV mode; and

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switching from the TV mode to the phone mode.

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15. The method in accordance with Claim 14, wherein the switching step includes disabling the operation of the TV unit.